

**Statement by Rep. Chris Smith**  
**On H.Res. 675**  
**February 28, 2006**

The Arab League has scheduled its next summit to begin on March 28<sup>th</sup> in Khartoum, Sudan. This meeting would represent a public relations boost for that regime, which has done nothing to deserve the positive recognition that such a summit would provide. Several weeks ago, the African Union held its summit in Khartoum, but in that meeting, African leaders made clear to the Government of Sudan that its behavior disqualified it to head that organization. It is unlikely that the Arab League would use their meeting to make such a statement to the Khartoum government.

The situation in Darfur continues to be perilous for the thousands of refugees virtually imprisoned in camps throughout the Darfur region. Hundreds of thousands of people have been displaced from their homes and cannot return for fear of their lives. Women must obtain armed escorts to look for wood for fires, and men face almost certain death if they leave their camps for any reason.

The Government of Sudan has continued to cooperate with the Janjaweed in their attacks on Darfur residents. This was reported by the African Union as recently as last fall, and the U.S. State Department has confirmed the continuing cooperation between the Janjaweed and elements of the Government of Sudan. The Janjaweed live up to the origin of their name by acting as devils plaguing the people of Darfur. Regardless of any peace talks being conducted in Abuja, Nigeria, if these terrorists do not cease their murderous rampage against the people of that region, there can be no satisfactory settlement of this situation.

House Resolution 675 seeks to express to the Arab League our government's disapproval of their decision to meet in Khartoum in light of the tragedy of Darfur. It calls on the Arab League to join with the Government of Sudan, the rebels and the international community to cooperate in ending the genocide that has occurred in Darfur.

In fact, the northern elements of the Government of Sudan, who controlled all the levers of power before the Government of National Unity was installed last July, based their mistreatment of non-Muslims in the South on their lack of respect for those who do not share their Arab heritage. In Darfur, most of the people are Muslim, but not Arab. Again, their non-Arab heritage made them acceptable targets for genocidal attacks.

The Arab League has a valuable and unique role to play in emphasizing that to be Arab should not mean that non-Arabs should be targets for mistreatment. If any long-term resolution of the Darfur crisis is to be found, then the Arab League must take up this challenge.

The Arab league also could be helpful in joining with the international community to support an expanded African-led civilian protection mission in Darfur. After all, many of those in danger there are fellow Muslims.

I ask my colleagues to give favorable consideration to H. Res. 675, which is a very timely and useful statement on the continuing tragedy in Darfur and how the Arab League can use the ill-timed summit in Khartoum as the first step in their effort to help resolve this crisis.